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C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 007565

SIPDIS

PRM/A AND WHA/AND

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/10/2015

TAGS: [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [CO](#) [VE](#)

SUBJECT: UNHCR REFUGEE REFERRAL FOR FORMER VENEZUELAN AIR
FORCE COLONEL SILVINO JOSE BUSTILLOS QUINTANA

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood for reasons 1.4 (b&d)

1.(U) This is an action message. Please see paragraph 4.

[12.](#) (C) Embassy Refugee Coordinator received a refugee referral for former Venezuelan Colonel Silvino Jose Bustillos Quintana (DPOB 21 August 1951, Venezuela) from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Bogota office. Embassy recommends normal processing under the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program (USRP). If accepted, a Department of Homeland Security attorney would adjudicate Bustillos' case during an upcoming DHS circuit ride to Ecuador.

[13.](#) (C) Colonel Bustillos entered Colombia on November 9, 2004 and applied for asylum on December 13, 2004. His case is pending with the GoC. The Venezuelan press has speculated that Bustillos was kidnapped and possibly killed by Venezuelan military intelligence while other reports placed him in Colombia. RefCoord has emailed the UNHCR referral to PRM and WHA which details Bustillos' account of persecution by the Chavez Government and need for resettlement to a third country.

[14.](#) (C) Foreign Ministry refugee contacts report that there are several other pending cases of former Venezuelan military officers who signed the so-called Carmona decree after Chavez' temporary removal from power on April 11, 2002. Given the sensitive nature of Colonel Bustillos' case, and the inevitable pull factor for other Venezuelans seeking refuge from the Chavez regime, Embassy requests Department concurrence in submitting the UNHCR referral to the USRP and guidance on processing other cases that may follow.
WOOD